REMARKS

Claims 1-22 have been rejected. Claims 1, 10, 16, and 20-22 have been amended. Claim 9 has been cancelled. No new claims have been added. Reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-8 and 10-22 is requested.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-2, 3-5, 9-18, 20-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being anticipated by Endoh (US 6,707,566).

Claim 1 has been amended. Support for this amendment can be found in the present specification, page 3, lines 28-32. Endoh does not anticipate claim 1 because Endoh fails to disclose each and every element of claim 1. In particular, Endoh at least does not disclose the element of transmitting the entire print job from the host to a store-and-forward device residing on the network for reception and temporary storage at the store-and-forward device and forwarding by the store-and-forward device to the at least two separate printers.

It was alleged that the host storing the print job in the RAM 203 of Endoh constitutes transmitting to a store-and-forward device. However, because the RAM 203 is within the host 104 the RAM 203 does not reside on the network and the print job is not transmitted *from* the host 104 to the RAM 203. Moreover, the RAM 203 does not forward the print job to the printers; instead the host 104 sends the print job to the printers. This design is inferior particularly in the instance when printers are currently processing jobs and do not have printer memory available. There is no location residing on the network to temporarily store and later forward the print job. As a consequence, the print job might be prematurely sent to busy printers that do not have memory available to store the print job and that cannot accept the print job. Accordingly, the multicast transmission will be unreliable and network bandwidth will be consumed as the multicast transmission is resent again and again until the transmission is successful. The design is also inferior when network traffic too high for immediate transmission from the host to the printers.

Furthermore, there is no suggestion to modify Endoh to include forwarding by a store-and-forward device. For example, Figure 1 of Endoh does not disclose any devices residing on the network between the path from the host PC 104 and the printers 102-107.

In contrast to Endoh, claim 1 includes the feature of transmitting the entire print job from the host to a store-and-forward device residing on the network for temporary storage by the store-and-forward device and forwarding to the printers. Temporarily storing the entire print job on a device residing in the network is advantageous because it improves reliability

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and reduces wasteful network transmissions. Thus, claim 1 should be allowed. Claims 2-8 are dependant and should also be allowed.

Claim 10 has been amended and should be allowed for at least similar reasons as claim 1. Claims 11-15 are dependant and should also be allowed. Claim 16 has been amended and should be allowed for at least similar reasons as claim 1. Claims 17-19 are dependant and should also be allowed. Claim 20 has been amended and should be allowed for at least similar reasons as claim 1. Claim 21 is dependant and should also be allowed.

Claim 22 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being anticipated by Spohn et al. (JP 411296333A).

Claim 22 has been amended. Spohn does not anticipate claim 22 for at least the reason that Spohn does not disclose the element of receiving a multicast network transmission at a networked printer from a store-and-forward device residing on the network. Thus, claim 22 should be allowed.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 6-8 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Endoh as described in claim 1 above, and in view of Yokoyama (U.S. Patent No. 6,166,826).
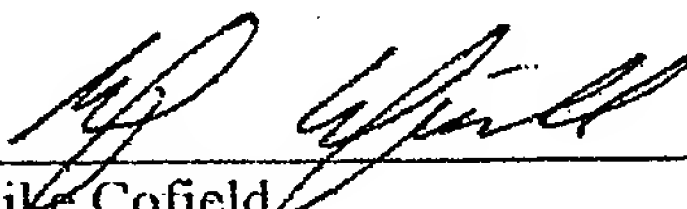
Claim 6-8 are dependant and should be allowed for at least the same reason as claim 1. Neither Endoh nor Yokoyama teach at least the element of transmitting the entire print job from the host to a store-and-forward device residing on the network for reception and temporary storage at the store-and-forward device and forwarding by the store-and-forward device to the at least two separate printers. Thus, claims 6-8 should be allowed. Claim 19 should be allowed for at least similar reasons.

Conclusion

Allowance of claims 1-8 and 10-22 is requested. The Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned at (503) 222-3613 if it appears that an interview would be helpful in advancing the case.

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Respectfully submitted,

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